

Mr. Price's
Funeral SERMON
FOR
John Jekyll, Esq;



A Funeral
SERMON,

Occasioned by the much Lamented
Death of

John Jekyll, Esq;

*Collector of His Majesty's Customs for
the Port of Boston, &c.*

Who Departed this Life December 30.

1732. *Ætat. 58.*

By the REVEREND

Mr. Roger Price, A. M.

Commissary of the *Episcopal Churches in New-England*, and Rector of the King's Chapel in Boston.

Psal. xxxvii. 37. *Mark the perfect Man,
and behold the Upright, for the End
of that Man is Peace.*

Printed in the Year 1733.

A Family

SECRETARY

Occasional by the Marchioness of Tulliberry

Diary of

Louise Lekeith Esq

Collection of Miss Weston's Curiosities



1800 Library of the British Museum

Ms. D. 1. 1. Vol. 3. Folio 30.

Mrs. Yester's A.M.

Continuation of Mrs. Yester's Journal in a

A Year from the Return of the King's Campaign

London in the Year 1800

VOLUME SEVEN.

A Funeral

S E R M O N.

Ecclesiastes 7. 2. I断言 no
IT is better to go to the House of Mourning,
than to go to the House of Feasting: For
this is the end of all Men, and the Living
will lay it to Heart.

AN immoderate Love of Pleasure, and sensual delights, has so corrupted even the Minds of the Rich, and infected the meaner sort of People, that the serious thoughts of Death, and another World, or a concern for the future well-being of the Soul, are regarded by too many as the effect of narrow Principles and a confin'd Education. The most important business of their Lives is to pass away the time merrily, not to use, or improve it. Come say they, let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the Creatures like

like as in Youth; let us fill our selves with costly Wine & Ointments; and let no Flower of the Spring pass by us; let none of us go without his part of our Voluptuousness, for this is our Portion and our Lot is this. By these arts, and this way of reasoning, they banish all apprehensions of a future State, as far as possible out of their Minds. And altho' nothing is so certain as that they must shortly Die, or so uncertain as the time when; nothing so terrible as the vengeance of a provok'd GOD, and the eternal punishment of a wicked or misspent Life; yet they studiously avoid these mortifying considerations, and endeavour to live as if they were Immortal; as if they had nothing to do but divert themselves in this World, and nothing to fear in the other.

To warn these Men of their danger is but to provoke their anger, and make them more obstinate; if Reason is against them, they will set themselves against Reason; and when Arguments fail they fly to Ridicule to prevent the Efficacy of good Counsel, and quiet their Consciences in spite of their Judgment.

Such are the present Race of Men that make the greatest Noise in the World; and to such as these the Text will doubtless seem a Paradox, a matter of derision rather than of practice. A Doctrine so contrary to the Sentiments of the bulk of Mankind, will want something more than bare humane Authority to support it.

it. And what can be more satisfactory and convincing, than the Judgment of a Man exceeding all Mankind. One who thoroughly knew the World, and was able to dissect its parts, and accurately to discent upon every particular, from the humble *Hyssop*, to the lofty *Cedar*. Had this advice come from some morose *Cynick*, some discontented *Divine*, or some secluded *Hermit*, we might have suspected a Falacy in the Text. But when no less a Person than an inspired *Preacher*, and Royal *Prophet* tells us; *it is better to go to the House of Mourning, than to the House of Feasting*: This should put us to silence, and recommend it to our Attention & Practice.

But Perhaps this may not satisfy the Voluptuaries of our Age, who are fond of the Prerogative of Judging for themselves, and can hardly be persuaded to believe a Doctrine tho' ever so reasonable that crosses their Inclinations.

I shall therefore for their further satisfaction in the following Discourse,

First, Examine the pretensions of these two places mentioned in my Text, to our Approbation and Choice, by considering the advantages of each.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to make my Discourse further usefull, by applying it to the present Sorrowful Occasion of our meeting.

The

A Funeral SERMON

The Text will afford us this useful Lesson,

That the Melancholy Spectacle of a Dying Person, with all the Affecting Circumstances, generally accompanying it, which are the subject of our thoughts in the House of Mourning, are more profitable to Man in the present state he is in, than the gayer and more pleasant Images which present themselves to us at a Festival, or Entertainment of Mirth: And the reason is this, because in the first we have before our Eyes, a view of what we must all come to; *this is the end of all Men*; all the Care and Business, the Pleasures and Amusements of Men must terminate here: And who can behold this miserable end of Humane Nature, without laying it to heart; and thinking it a matter of the greatest Importance to be prepar'd for it. For to Die is not to be divested of our *being*, and rest for ever in a state of *inactivity* and *forgetfulness*; or as the Atheistical Sensualists in the Book of *Wisdom* express it, to be hereafter as tho' we had never been: But it is to rise to a new Life, Eternal, either in *happiness* or *misery*, according as we have fitted our selves for this end. — We have a great work to finish, and but little time to perform it in; it behoves us therefore to husband well this short Span, and not spend it in vain Amusements; it behoyes us to seek for and improve with our utmost Industry, all the assistances which Nature or Grace can afford us, for the carrying on and perfecting this necessary

necessary work. And what can more conduce to fit us for our end, than frequently to think of it, and set it before our eyes ; this will enable us to meet it with chearfulness, and bear it with patience ; it will disarm it of it's terrors, and make it familiar to us. Such objects of Mortality, and the Reflections they naturally occasion, may properly be call'd an *Entertainment for the Soul, and a Spiritual Festival.* Whereas in the House of Feasting our Bodies are pamper'd but our Souls are starved. Luxury & Mirth may indeed please the Imagination, and delight the Senses ; but they stupifie the Understanding, and deaden the vigour of the Mind ; they lead us out of the way to our true end, and happiness ; by fixing our affections upon sensual Objects, so that we are ready to wish this World was our resting Place, to build our Tabernacle upon Earth, and say, *it is good to be here* ; here let us dwell for we have a Delight therein,

But to be fully satisfied, which of these two Places has the best pretensions to our approbation and choice, let us imagine our selves Spectators in each, and consider the Advantages on both sides. The first gloomy Scene naturally forces it self into our Minds from the Melancholly Object before us.

And what can be more profitable or more terrible than the sight of a Dying Man, when he lies breathing out his Soul on his Death-

Bed. To see how the ancient Society of the Soul and Body is rent asunder, and to see how they struggle at the parting, being in some doubt what shall become of them hereafter. The Spirits shrink inward and retire to the Anquish'd Heart ; while that in the mean time pants with affrighting Pangs, and can hardly discharge its Office, and keep the Lagging Blood in its circulating Motion. To see how the Mind strives to express it self when the Organs of the Voice are too weak for utterance. To see the Eye settled to a fixed dimness, which a little before was swift as the shoots of Lightning, nimbler than the Thought, and bright as the Polished Diamond. To see all his Friends like Conduits dropping Tears about him while he neither knows his Wants, nor they his Cure. To see the Countenance thro' which perhaps there shin'd a lovely Majesty now altered to a Frightful paleness, and the terrors of a Ghastly look. To think how that which could reason and perswade, and govern a Family, is now become a thing so full of Horror, that Children are afraid to look at it ; and must therefore be removed out of our sight to the dark and hideous Grave ; there to become a Nest of Worms, a Lump of Filth, and a Box of pallid Putrefaction. When thou shalt see all these things happen to one whose Conversation had indear'd him to thee, and with whom thou haft often been ingag'd in Scenes of Mirth, Feasting and Jollity.

Tell me if thou canst then find a thought of thine disposing thee to Pleasure, and the fugitive Toys of Life. O what a bubble! what a puff! what but a wink of Life is Man! and with what a general Whirpool Death swallows up the whole World! Who can behold such a sight as this and not lay it to Heart? and learn from it both Humility, and Loftiness, the one to debase the Body, which must thus perish in an offensive Naftiness. The other to advance the Soul which lives here but for a higher and more Heavenly Ascension. Who that have seen such an Object, would employ his thoughts and spend his Time in Pampering a frail Carcass destin'd to Corruption and Worms, and neglect that Noble and Divine part of his Nature which will survive this final Dissolution, and be the Subject of Happiness or Misery to all Eternity.

What a noble Lesson is here to the Practice of Virtue, Charity, Self-denial, and Contempt of the World. Remember thy latter End and thou wilt never do amiss; remember Corruption and the Grave and abide in the Commandments.

2ly. Let us remove our thoughts from this Mournful Spectacle, to the House of Feasting, and observe what we meet with there. Here we are presented with the gay and sprightly Images of Mirth, Revelling and Luxury; the obscene Jest, the loud Laugh, and the flowing Bowl. These are inviting

A Funeral SERMON

at a distance and too easily Captivate a Carnal and Unthinking Mind. Like Solomon's Wine, they sparkle in the Cup, and please the Fancy, but in the end they bite like a Serpent, and leave a deadly Venom behind them. Take a superficial View of them; and they promise something substantial by the Flutter and Confusion, in which they put the Spirits; and the Eagerness with which they are Courted, but examine them narrowly and you will find they are only delusions of the Devil, who with Pleasure allures Men into security, then steals away their Souls and leaves them to the Wrath of Heaven. Sensual delights may sooth the Imagination, and gratifie our depraved Appetites; but they enslave the Will, enervate the noble faculties of the Soul; and render Man unfit for the most essential Duties of his Christian calling, Devotion to his GOD, or Charity to his Neighbour, what indeed can be expected that is Great, or Good, from one whose thoughts are forever creeping upon the Earth, and his desires and affections upon a level with the Beasts? It is more than probable that he who submits to Pleasure will fall at last a Prey to Diseases, Shame, and Remorse, even the extreme of Joy is Sadness; as Solomon says, *in much Laughter is much Sorrow*, for it often puts Reason to the Blush, and leaves us for the most part cause of Repentance. Wherefore a wise Heathen advises us not to estimate Pleasures upon their approach but at their farewell, that by feeling their sting we may discover

discover their base treachery and learn to value them, not by what they promise, but by what they really perform. By this Calculation we shall discover the Cheat, and find that our greatest Happiness consists in Expectation only, that Pleasure is but a Phantom which flies from our Grasp whenever we attempt to seize it, or vanishes like a shadow when we fall upon it ; leaving us forever dissatisfied and forever in pursuit of it. It is like a false light hung out to Marriners at Sea, which draws them from their true Course till they run upon Rocks or Sholes, and so become an easy Prey to their betrayers. Wretched stupidity of Man, that when his native Country is so inviting, and the way so plain to it should be entic'd aside by every trifling Gugaw the Devil sets in his view to deceive him ; altho' he knows it is only to trapan his Soul to ruin.

But suppose Worldly Pleasure was more substantial, or more Innocent, than I have here represented it, yet alass how Fleeting and Momentary is it ; we are scarce come into the World, and begin to look about us before we are called away. We have no sooner laid up our Stores and entered upon the enjoyment of them, but our Souls are required of us, and we are Summoned before the Judgment-seat of GOD to account for the use and improvement of them. Could we indeed procure an uninterrupted Felicity, or draw Life into perpetuity, could

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we keep back the Eclipsing sadnesses of the Mind, and give the World a Constancy in all its parts we might then with some reason be fond of this Life and the Pleasures of it; we might then without censure say with the Rich Man in the Gospel, *Soul thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years, take thine Ease, eat, drink and be merry.* But when we consider that a *Hair* or a *Fly* may snatch us in a moment from our dear bought delights, how does this damp our Riotous Mirth, check our unbounded desires, and put our busie Mind in a more safe and quiet state.

Let us then often consider and lay it to Heart, that Death is hastning upon us apace; that whether we will or not we are every Day drawing nearer to our Journeys end, and that inevitable doom which will determine our everlasting Condition. That whether we *play* or *labour*, whether we serve *GOD* or *Mammon*, Time keeps his constant motion, and flies as fast in *Idleness* as in *Imploymen*t, the Sun rises and sets and our sand runs. An hour of *Vice* is as long as an hour of *Virtue*. But the effects are infinitely different. The one treasures up a Pleasure for us in an Everlasting Life; the other provides us Torture in a Death Eternal.

And as the effects of Death are vastly different to Men thus differently engag'd, so likewise are their conceptions of it. One lives in

a fullness of Joy here, he sings and revels and diverts himself, as if his Harvest was perpetual and the World was for ever to smile upon him this Man would do any thing rather than Die he trembles at the apprehensions of his approaching Fate ; whereby he tells us (tho' his Tongue expresses it not) that he expects a worse estate hereafter.

Another lives hardly here, he looks upon this World as his Prison, and useth with great moderation and prudence the Pleasures which surround him ; his thoughts and affections are fixed above. And this Man seeks Death but feels him not, intimating that he expects a better condition by Death. For it is a known Maxim, that Nature ever aims at something better, nor would she wish a Change if she did not think it a benefit.

Now what do these two Men teach us ? They teach us, that there is both a Misery and a Joy attending Man when he is vanished hence. They teach us likewise how to procure the one, and to avoid the other. *The Wicked is driven away in his own Wickedness ; but the Righteous hath hope in his Death.*

And from whence is this difference, but because one has made Death the subject of his Thoughts and Meditations, and prepar'd himself for it by a good Life. The other has thrust

thrust it from him, and view'd only the Superficial part of it, so that when he perceives it coming upon him unprovided, he is amazed, and confounded. How happy is the good Man who can equally Live or Die, he knows while he is here GOD will protect him, and when he goes hence GOD will receive him. How miserable is the Wicked who lives under the Terror of Death, every Spectacle of Mortality terifies him, every casual Danger affrights him: What can the poor Wretch do? It is impossible for him to fly from Death, and to meet it he is afraid. So that if it seizes upon him like an arrest of Treason at a Banquet. Blasts him like a Lightning Flash, and takes him from his darling Pleasures, to give an Account to GOD for the abuse of his Time, his Money, his Health, and his Reason. O Death how bitter art thou to a Man that liveth at rest in his Possessions, unto a Man that hath nothing to vex him, and hath Prosperity in all things.

When thou shalt lie faint and groaning upon thy *Dying Bed*, with thy Friends all sad about thee, and thy Blood and Spirits growing cold and slow within thee: When thou shalt begin to reckon thy Life, not by Days or Hours, but by the throbings of thy Pulse, every stroke of which pushes the nearer to the Fatal Precipice. In this great Agony of Nature, when some acute Pain brings to thy Remembrance thy former Excesses & Extravagance; will it then

then be any comfort to thy departing Soul, to reflect upon the Pleasures thou haft enjoy'd in this World; & how merrily thou haft spent thy Time? No, these thoughts will then be a bitter Portion to thee. And thou shalt wish in vain that thou hadst oftner gone to the House of *Mourning*; and made Death more familiar and friendly to thee, by meditating upon it and preparing for it. Then wilt thou curse the tempting Morsel, and know too late the value of Health and a good Conscience. Then wilt thou be convinced (at a dear rate) that nothing in the World is worth our Care, but what will help us to die Clearly and Courageously.

Many things there be which may divert us in the Course of our Life, but in the end of it nothing will be regarded by us, or yeild us any satisfaction but the reflection upon the Innocency and Usefulness of our past Life: and a prospect of the Reward that is to Crown our Labours. Our Rejoycing then will be this, *the testimony of our Consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our Conversation in the World.* When we can say with St. Paul, when within view of his end, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that Day; the Day of Retribution.*

Thus have I finished my first Proposal ; and represented the advantages on both sides the Question. I shall leave it to your own Judgment and Prudence to act accordingly, which I presume has little room for Hesitation.

Suffer me only to intreat you in few words to behave like Men & Rational Creatures, and if you really believe there is a GOD who will certainly call you to a strict account for all your Actions, and a future State of Happiness or Misery to reward them ; forbear to live as if you believed it not, in defiance of his Anger, and contempt of his Favour. Take the impartial Ballance of Truth in your hand, and weigh the Profit against the Loss, things Temporal with things Eternal. Put the wrath of GOD in one Scale, and the allurements of the World, with the solicitations of your Joyal Companions in the other. In one Scale an eternal and exceeding weight of Glory ; in the other, the trifling unisatisfactory pleasures of a Short Life. The eternal torments of Hell the consequence of an idle dissolute Life in one Scale ; and the difficulties of Religion in the other ; then judge with sincerity & chuse with discretion. Consider your latter end, and apply your Heart unto Wisdom, and never be so foolish as to spend a few Days in vanity and folly, and then in a moment go down to the Grave and be Damn'd for ever.

Let me now desire your Patience while I apply my Discourse to the present sorrowful Occasion of our meeting, the second thing I proposed : We are come here to perform, the last Friendly Office to a departed Brother whose loss could not be enough lamented, if our Tears would in any degree add to the Happiness of the Dead. But as we should shew but little Gratitude and Affection, if such a loss made no impression upon us. So an immoderate Grief would argue a want of Faith in the Mercies of GOD, and a distrust in the good qualities of the Deceased. Let us rather improve the impression, that it may be for the better to us as we hope it is to him. As his Life was a General Blessing to the place he lived in, so let us make his Death beneficial to us, that even when Dead he may be yet useful.

And hence we may learn, that altho' it is not in the Power of good Principles and charitable Actions, to retard or prevent the stroke of Death ; yet they are absolutely necessary to disarm it of its sting, and make it comfortable to us.

This our departed Friend was a lively instance of ; for notwithstanding the World courted him with all the delights which give a relish to Life and make it desirable ; such as a plentiful Fortune, a beloved Wife, a numer-

ous & hopeful Progeny, a sweet Society of faithful Friends, and the universal Esteem of Mankind, yet the Consciousness of a Life spent in kind and good Offices, fortified him in the approach of Death, and enabled him cheerfully and contentedly to submit to the Will of GOD. The GOD in whose Mercy he confided, who has declared that the Merciful shall receive Mercy.

To enlarge upon the Character of a Person generally known by his publick Employment, and as generally beloved by his Prudence and Generosity in the discharge of it, would, I think be unnecessary. I shall only desire you to join with me in observing that part of it which was most conspicuous, and may be most useful.

He had served the Crown in no dishonourable Station many Years, and in different Reigns, with great approbation ; and as he approved himself a faithful and diligent Servant to his Royal Masters ; so was he wisely cautious of injuring and oppressing his fellow-Subjects.

He had a greatness of Soul, which rais'd him above all mean unworthy Methods of Increasing his Fortune, and could hardly be bounded by his Income, altho' considerable.

He was a punctual observer of his Word, tho' it were to his own hinderance, and scorn'd

a deceit tho ever so profitable. And no wonder he should be free from all Oppression, Falshod, and Fraud, who desired Money for no other use than to do Good and to Distribute. His Heart and his Table were always open to the least appearance of Worth; he was a patron to the Distressed, and a support to the Poor. Who is there among us that has not felt the Overflowing of his good Nature? and either rejoyc'd under his Roof, or been relieved by his Bounty: Who ever entred into his House without Pleasure, or departed without Satisfaction? He was Master of the truly social Virtues. He possess'd that benignity of Temper, that easines of Address, that chearfulness of Humour, which have such a Power of engageing the Esteem and Affections of Men.

Thus by a disinterested and univeral good Will to Mankind, a sincere and hearty Friendship to his more intimate Acquaintance, a tender Love to his Wife, and an affectionate Regard to his Children, he has left behind him a Name that his Praife may be reported, a Name which Solomon tells us, *is better than precious Ointment or great Riches*, a Name which will long survive him, and be an Honour to his Family, and will entitle them to the Favour, the Protection and the Assistance of all those who have either profited by the Generosity of their Father, or delighted in his Friendship.

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And now I presume I need not insist upon the latter part of the Text, and press you to *Lay it to Heart*, the loss is too general not to be felt by all here present, and so to be felt as to be greatly lamented. But instead of giving vent to our Grief, let us so *Lay it to Heart* as to lessen this loss to the Publick, to his Family, and to his Friends; to the Publick by our Imitation of his good Qualities; to his Family by returns of Gratitude and Friendship where they are due, and may be needful. To his Friends by our earnest study and endeavouring of obtaining this fair Character, of being useful and agreeable in our Lives. For unless we are so to others, who can we expect will be so to us.

Let the Melancholy Object before us, the Corpse of our departed Friend, our late dear Companion, teach us that Life is a vain thing, a vain Name, without Friendship, and Friendship without Virtue and Virtue without Piety, and Piety without Charity. Let us be convinced by Religion, and by Experience, that nothing in this World will make our Lives so comfortable, and afford us greater Joy & Pleasure, than doing kindnesses and forgiving injuries; and nothing will intitle us to a more Glorious reward in Heaven.

The Practising this Divine Lesson, will help us to conquer the fear of Death; and smooth our Passage into the next World. Peace with GOD, with our Selves, with our Friends, and with our Enemies will give us Peace at our latter End.

Lastly,

Lastly, Let his Example and Death teach us, not to be too closely united to any of the good things of this World, so as not to be ready willingly to part with them whenever the Allwise Donor pleases to take them from us, or us from them. And to dry up all our Tears let us consider, that all the Masses of Creatures put together, are not able to satisfy the Capacious Soul of Man, which is still extending itself beyond this vain and perishing World.

GOD only who is Infinite is the Center of our Happiness, in him do all our vast desires terminate, and when we lose the Creature we find him, All things we now meet with are full of Trouble and Vexation, who can utter it: We are toss'd and bandie'd about by unruly Appetites, and ungovernable Passions. Heaven only is a Haven of Rest. In the Courts of the Father of Lights, dwells Truth and Joy, and Constancy. While we sail in this rough Ocean of Life, we must expect to meet with Rocks and Shoals, with Storms and Tempests, nor can our shatter'd Vessel Anchor in safety, till it reposes it self in his Mercies, who is the Life and Light and Soul of all.

Here then let us fix our Hope, here let us place our Affections, that having a Mind thus Gloriously rais'd on high, we may stand as a well built Structure, tho' outwardly foil'd and clouded with the Fume of Earthly things, yet by the Gracious Splendor of the Almighty, bright within, and above the reach of Fear or Malice, or the Worlds Visissitude.

desire of the clergy and people of Ireland, and of the friends of humanity throughout the world, that the present Government would make every exertion to secure the safety and happiness of the poor and distressed population of Ireland, and to put an end to the misery and want which now prevail there. The following extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Pitt, in the House of Commons, on the 1st of December, 1800, will give a clear idea of the state of Ireland at that time.

To those who suppose that the condition of Ireland is improving, I can only say, that it is a fact, that the condition of Ireland is deteriorating. The following extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Pitt, in the House of Commons, on the 1st of December, 1800, will give a clear idea of the state of Ireland at that time.

6 APRIL 64

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